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Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-fifth session
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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

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Statement

The International Federation of Women in Legal Careers:

- Has analysed the priority theme of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work".
- Reaffirms that the right to education is a fundamental human right, as consecrated in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, articles 5 and 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Considers women and girls' education as the most powerful tool to obtain empowerment of women and gender equality, and consequently to combat gender violence.
- Reaffirms that attaining the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goals 2 and 3, will require the total eradication of all discrimination against women and girls and their full participation in all decision-making processes.
- Regards as essential, in order to achieve the above-mentioned goals, that sexism, all kinds of stereotypes related to the traditional roles of women and men and gender bias be eradicated from all educational programmes.
- Therefore wishes to reaffirm general recommendation No. 3 adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its sixth session in 1987, in which the Committee, "Further considering that, although the reports have come from States with different levels of development, they present features in varying degrees showing the existence of stereotyped conceptions of women, owing to socio-cultural factors, that perpetuate discrimination based on sex and hinder the implementation of article 5 of the Convention, [urged] all States parties effectively to adopt education and public information programmes, which will help eliminate prejudices and current practices that hinder the full operation of the principle of the social equality of women".
- Thinks, consequently, that equality and its values should be taught from childhood, in every school, as education for equality is the major instrument in fighting gender violence.
- Believes that it is the establishment of conditions for economic, social and cultural development everywhere in the world which makes possible the exercise and enjoyment of all the human rights of women and men in liberty and equality.
- Thinks that all States should take all appropriate measures in order to guarantee that all teachers, at all levels of education, give instruction in women's human rights, equality and, in countries with a large immigrant population, knowledge of the different cultures.

- Considers also that all States should take all appropriate measures in order to guarantee mandatory school attendance by girls, especially in cases of pregnancy, HIV/AIDS or extreme poverty.

- Has examined the documents produced by the Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Science and Technology and wishes to express its agreement with the background paper presented by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, "Women's and girls' access to and participation in science and technology".[1]

- Given the current economic and financial crisis, regards as more important than ever that all States should make an effective commitment to the creation of mechanisms for full employment and decent work.

- Makes an appeal to all States to give social and responsible investment greater priority and to allocate appropriate resources for women and girls to have access to credit and financial assets and to promote their education in all areas, including in the financial industry, so that women can advance to leadership positions within it.

- Recommends the drafting of an international convention that will establish some new rules regarding financial transactions in order to give security and transparency to the financial markets.

- Urges States to direct the competent executive, legislative and judicial authorities to take all necessary measures to allocate adequate budgetary funds to effectively promote and protect the human rights of women and girls.

[1] Available from www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/gst_2010/UNESCO-BP.2.-EGM-ST.pdf.